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We claim:

1. A method for providing data analysis tools in a distributed environment, comprising the steps of:
 - (i) receiving a service request from a client, the service request including input data;
 - (ii) creating a job including the input data and a job identifier;
 - (iii) dispatching the job to an agent for delivery to a service provider hosting a requested analysis tool for processing the input data;
 - (iv) receiving a result from the service provider, the result including output data representing the input data processed in accordance with the requested analysis tool; and
 - (v) transmitting the output data to the client.
2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the steps of receiving and transmitting are accomplished over the Internet.
3. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of dispatching the job includes formatting the input data into packets for transmission.
4. A method according to claim 3, wherein the step of formatting includes marking up the input data with extensible markup language (XML).
5. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of creating the job includes storing job information in a database.
6. A method according to claim 1, wherein the step of dispatching includes balancing loads between application servers.
7. A method according to claim 3, wherein the step of receiving the result includes integrating received packets containing the results to recover the output data.
8. A system for providing data analysis tools in a distributed environment, comprising

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a web server for receiving a service request, including input data, from a client;
a manager for creating a job including the input data and a job identifier;
a dispatcher for dispatching the job to an agent for delivery to a service provider hosting
a requested analysis tool for processing the input data; and
an integrator for receiving a result from the service provider, the result including output
data representing the input data processed in accordance with the requested analysis tool.

9. A system according to claim 8, further including at least one web server for connecting
to the client over the Internet.

10. A system according to claim 8, wherein the manager includes a database for storing the
job information.

11. A system according to claim 8, wherein the dispatcher includes load balancing means for
balancing loads between service providers.

12. A system according to claim 8, wherein the manager includes markup means.

13. A system according to claim 12, wherein the markup means includes extensible mark up
language (XML).

14. A system according to claim 13, wherein the integrator includes means to reassemble the
job to retrieve the output data.

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